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SUBJECT: TIP IN TURKEY: TURKISH MEDIA ATTENTION, March 1-15, 2005

1. (U) In response to G/TIP inquiries, national and international media sources published the following news articles about TIP in Turkey. Text of articles originally published in Turkish is provided through unofficial local FSN translation.
2. (U) Published in the weekly journal Tempo, dated March 2-8.:

TITLE: The Purple Roof of Sex Slaves; by Berrin Karakas.

BEGIN TEXT: The HRDF has worked on the issue of human trafficking issue since 2003 and continues to develop new projects. The latest project is a shelter that has been active for four months. When we heard that the Foundation opened a shelter, we wanted to go there and listen to their story from themselves. But the Foundation keeps the address of the shelter like a state secret. Even the police that they work with do not know where this shelter is located. The reason is of course security. A recent example was a person calling the shelter and claiming that he was the attorney of the girls but actually he was the lawyer of the person who was marketing the girls. Under such circumstances the names of the girls and the address of the shelter are kept as a secret. The situation must be quite serious because even the HRDF employees are worried that something might happen to them.

Even if we could enter the shelter, the residents won't have the strength to talk and tell us what had happened. Some already committed suicide and others are going through severe trauma. Naturally they don't want to remember what had happened.

Although there are many such victims, the HRDF shelter is a tiny place where only ten people can stay. The HRDF officials said that they have not yet received a victim younger than 18. They added that the approximate age was around 20-25. The main goal of the shelter is to provide a home environment to victims who would have normally stayed at a police detention center and to ensure their safe return home. There is also the physical and mental treatment of these women and this is not easy task because of bureaucratic issues.

Victims can stay at the shelter for 4-5 weeks. They, along with the police, are also implementing a new regulation that allows these women to stay up to six months in Turkey on a humanitarian visa. The HRDF works along with the local NGOs in the other country for ensuring a safe return home for these women. They accompany these women to the airport and in their own country they are met by the NGOs there and taken under protection.

The program on the protection of human trafficking victims, conducted jointly by the Interior, Health and Foreign Affairs Ministries and the police, is brand new and needs support. The biggest problem of the foundation is the necessary funds for a larger shelter. Accordingly, they want support from other NGOs and associations.

In the shelter the women learn about a standard domestic life. They watch TV a lot and in particular the Russian stations. They cook. They do the laundry. But it is important that they don't consider this place home and they should make their future plans accordingly. So they have to regard this place not as a home but as a shelter.

Most of the residents of the shelter are women from the Ukraine and Moldova. The HRDF encountered only a single Iranian who was forced into prostitution.

Speaking of Iran, we asked the Foundation officials whether they also deal with other fugitives. They said that one should differentiate between human trafficking and human smuggling. They noted that most of the Iranians were those who got hurt because of human

smuggling. Meanwhile, human trafficking means that one makes another person stay by force. The HRDF wants to realize other projects in the future, including establishing a special telephone line. This will be a simple, three-digit hotline that will be hung on the walls at the airports and ports for the girls who were deceived to see. Thus the victims will know where to call for help. Most of the women in the shelter are women who were released after police raids. There are also those who came to the shelter with the help of their "client."

Before we go on telling you the story of M., a resident of the shelter, who came to the HRDF to talk to us, lets refer to "Lilya 4 Ever," a Swiss-Danish joint movie that was released last year. M. watched this movie three times at the shelter. She said that all women were covered with tears as they watched it. The residents of the shelter lived through things very similar to Lilya's story. In the movie Lilya's mother deserted her and left for the U.S. with her lover. Lilya, like all young girls had nice dreams. After she was forced into prostitution, Lilya committed suicide.

The Turkey adventure of M., too, is very similar to Lilya's story. A classmate recommended that she work as a waitress or barmaid in Turkey. They got a passport and a plane ticket for M., and as soon as she arrived, she was taken to Silivri (Istanbul), where she was given two options: "You will either serve as a caretaker or a bar escort." Since she did not speak a foreign language it was impossible for her to work as a caretaker. When M. objected, those at the house said, "You will be forced to do it. We will beat you to do it." Then they said, "Take a shower. Eat something and sleep. You will go to work tomorrow." While M., told us all this, sometimes she bowed her head (in embarrassment) but she smiles almost all the time.

M. worked for a month at a house in Silivri and when the police raided the house she was first taken into police custody and later put in the shelter. We asked her whether she did not go out (of the house) at all for one month. She did not and said that the girls who got along well with the bosses went out all the time and did shopping at the market. They also were paid but those who resisted were treated badly.

When asked whether she did not think of calling her family, M. said that she did not have the means. She also added that her family thought that she was serving as a servant here. It is highly unlikely that girls would run away even when they went out because the bosses tell the clients to make sure that they do not flee. Those who manage to escape are brought back by taxi drivers who are in agreement with bosses.

The greatest hope of M. is her lover C., whom she met at the house in Silivri. She said, "C. was supposed to take me out of there on January 5 and send me home but the police raided the house on January 6." M. does not want to go back to the Ukraine. She dreams of marrying C., working and having a nice home in Istanbul. M. has been in Turkey for three months. When we asked her about Turkey, she said that she liked it a lot. Her eyes sparkle when she says these words. Then with the help of her interpreter she asked HRDF officials how they can find C., after she shared his telephone number with them. She does not want to return to the Ukraine because she said, "If I do, they will sell me again or I'll be unemployed. I won't have a calm life there." When we asked, "Why Turkey?" she said, "I never left the Ukraine before. If my friend had suggested another place, I would have gone there." END TEXT.

13. Published on Saturday, March 12, 2005 by Turkish Daily News, <http://www.tdn.com.tr>:

TITLE: 157 Hotline for Human Trafficking Victims  
BEGIN TEXT: ANK - Turkish Daily News  
A hotline "157" that has been allocated for the victims of human trafficking in Turkey will be operational nationwide as of April 15, the Foreign Ministry said yesterday in a statement.  
"Turkey attaches great importance to combating human trafficking," said the Foreign Ministry describing human trafficking as "modern day slavery."  
The statement reminded of Ankara's earlier efforts against human trafficking as a "National Task Force" has been established under the chairmanship of the Foreign Ministry and an "Action Plan" prepared by the Task Force and approved by the Prime Ministry has been implemented.  
The hotline that has been allocated within the framework of these efforts will be staffed by Russian, Romanian and Turkish speaking personnel. "The emergency

calls from victims or third persons received will be conveyed to the security authorities for their immediate action," the statement said. END TEXT.

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